

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Preliminarily, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for allowed claims 3-4, 6-10, 12-13, and 15-24.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended. Support for the amendments may be found throughout the specification. No new matter has been added as a consequence of these amendments.

Claims 1-2, 5, 11, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP Publication No. 09164538 A ("538"). For at least the following reasons, the claims are believed to be patentable over the cited reference.

Applicants have amended the claims by imparting directly or indirectly, a limitation according to allowed claim 3, namely that contact of the particles with the curable composition (or matrix) causes said particles to swell. Therefore, Applicants believe that all claims are now in condition for allowance.

Therefore, all rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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